



– For Immediate Release –

Monday, August 18, 2008

IIMPACT detectives investigate drop house in the West Valley ***Three-day investigation nets 6 suspects***

A three-day investigation by detectives with IIMPACT (Illegal Immigration Prevention & Apprehension Co-op Team) resulted in the arrests of 6 suspected human smugglers and the rescue of 15 undocumented aliens (UDA's).

The case began on August 14th when IIMPACT detectives uncovered information about a victim being extorted for money by human smugglers or "coyotes". A DPS SOU squad served a warrant at 2322 W. Thomas #156. Three people were arrested at that location and charged with human smuggling. The investigation led detectives to a motel at 2700 W. Indian School Road. Detectives located seven UDA's being held in room 113.

On Saturday, August 16th, an additional suspect connected to the original three suspects threatened to "dump" the bodies of UDA's he was holding captive in the desert if ransom demands were not met. The Arizona Department of Public Safety SOU (Special Operations Unit) made forcible entry into a home at 8819 W. Encanto in Phoenix. Three suspects were arrested on scene and charged with human smuggling. Eight victims were rescued. Detectives determined sexual assault, in addition to other assaults, had been committed at that location.

Two weapons were found inside the house along with evidence consistent with a human smuggling ring. The UDA's were turned over to ICE.

IIMPACT was formed almost a year ago. It is a multi-agency project managed by GIITEM of the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) that is designed to address rising crime associated with illegal immigration. IIMPACT is comprised of personnel from DPS, Phoenix Police, Ice and the Arizona Fraudulent Identification Task Force (AFIT).

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